

Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs

Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Program Yearly Progress Report
July 1, 2019 - June 30, 2020 Reporting Period



Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs

Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Program Yearly Progress Report

July 1, 2019-June 30, 2020 Reporting Period

Date: May 15, 2020

Municipality: Town of Natick

Local MVP Contact Name: Jillian Wilson Martin

1. Please list your municipalities' top priority actions, in order of priority, identified through the MVP planning process

Natick identified 45 priority actions through the MVP planning process spanning the following categories:

- Water management (10)
- Emergency response (9)
- Low impact development (6)
- Open space and land management (6)
- Power (5)
- Stakeholder engagement (5)
- Vulnerable populations (4)

Of these, 25 actions were identified as high priority, 12 as medium priority and 8 as low priority. Tables detailing each action and the municipal lead responsible for pursuing each are attached. These are taken from Natick's CRB report, which is available on the Town's website at:

<https://www.natickma.gov/1535/Climate-Adaptation-and-Community-Resilience>

Recent revisions to Natick's priority actions are noted below.

2. Has your Core Team reconvened since your Listening Session? If so, describe the process and any revisions or updates your team made to the original MVP Report? Please list your MVP Core Team members and note any new members.

Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs

Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Program Yearly Progress Report

July 1, 2019 - June 30, 2020 Reporting Period



Natick's Core Team has reconvened multiple times since our original MVP Report was submitted to the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs in 2018. We also regularly exchange email and consult each other on MVP-related projects. In 2019 and 2020, the majority of our time together was focused on developing and passing a Stormwater Bylaw and crafting its supporting regulations.

In spring 2020, our team reviewed our list of MVP priorities and made the following revisions, based on feedback from new Core Team members and recent events:

Added

- Remove or rehabilitate the South Natick Dam to reduce risk of dam failure
- Develop an integrated vector-borne disease management plan and implement nature-based solutions for mosquito control
- Deepen relationships with and increase participation of underrepresented residents and local environmental justice communities in conversations around climate change and community resilience

Revised

- Changed "Increase generator capacity at existing and new Town facilities. Utilize Wilson Middle School and planned Kennedy Middle School (construction scheduled for 2020) as shelters" to:
 - "Increase the ability of critical municipal facilities across Town to operate in the event of sustained power outages. Explore opportunities to sustain power and support community needs and emergency operations at Wilson Middle School and Kennedy Middle School, and in the design and construction of all new Town buildings."
- Changed "Develop a strategy and implementation plan to address properties/streets/subject to flooding from poor drainage and run-off" to:
 - "Develop a strategy and implementation plan to address properties/streets/subject to flooding, including South Natick, Natick Center and properties along the commuter rail line."

Removed

- Conduct feasibility/engineering study to earthquake-proof municipally-owned buildings.
- Consider hiring disaster preparedness employee for the Town.

These changes were supported by Natick's Town Administrator in early May.

Below is a list of current members:

- Jeremy Marsette, Director of Public Works
- William McDowell, Town Engineer

Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs

Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Program Yearly Progress Report

July 1, 2019 - June 30, 2020 Reporting Period



- James Hicks, Police Chief (newly added)
- James Freas, Community & Economic Development Director (replaced previous CED Director)
- Ted Fields, Senior Planner
- James White, Health Director (newly added)
- Marianne Iarossi, Conservation Agent and Open Space Planner (replaced previous Conservation Agent)
- Jillian Wilson Martin, Sustainability Coordinator

3. Discuss any other work related to the MVP process or climate change resiliency in the municipality. In what ways has your municipality used the outcomes of your workshop in other planning efforts (e.g., updating existing local plans)?

In many areas, Natick's 2018 [Hazard Mitigation Plan Update](#) complements Natick's MVP Plan, while also providing additional detail and analysis of site-specific risks. The Town's 2030+ Master Plan, which was published in February 2019, also recommends a variety of climate change resiliency efforts. However these recommendations were not closely coordinated with MVP stakeholders, and the MVP Core Team may consider requesting updates to the 2030+ Master Plan to further incorporate climate adaptation and mitigation efforts in the coming years.

Since our last report, the Town has begun work on a 2020 Open Space and Recreation Plan Update and a 2020-2025 Net Zero Action Plan. Outcomes from the CRB workshop and subsequent priority actions are being reviewed in the development of these new plans.

4. Please list any grants that your municipality has applied for, or received, to implement actions from your MVP report. Please note grant awards or applications that advanced priority actions.

Natick has applied for the following grants to implement priority actions from our MVP report:

- MVP Action Grants, focused on:
 - LID zoning (awarded, completed in 2019)
 - Tree planting plan to mitigate heat islands (awarded, completed in 2019)
 - Water conservation project (awarded, completed in 2019)
 - Stormwater BMPs (two projects, not awarded)
 - Climate Resilient Park Design (not awarded)
- MAPC Accelerating Climate Resiliency Mini-Grant Program focused on stormwater BMP projects (not awarded)
- 604b (awarded)
 - This water quality grant, submitted with the Charles River Watershed Association, is focused on assessing green infrastructure opportunities using

Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs

Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Program Yearly Progress Report

July 1, 2019 - June 30, 2020 Reporting Period



Pond St, a prominent street, as a demonstration project (awarded 2019, in progress)

- DOER META grants focused on:
 - Microgrid feasibility study of Natick Center municipal complex (awarded, completed in 2020)
 - Retro-commissioning study of Wilson Middle School (awarded, completed in 2020)
- DOER Green Communities Grants. focused on energy efficiency projects:
 - 2018 (awarded \$245,000)
 - 2019 (awarded \$150,622)
 - 2020 (submitted, TBD)
- DOER REPA (submitted, TBD)
- EEA Planning Assistance Grant
 - Partnership with MAPC to develop community greenhouse gas emissions inventory tool and net zero action plan (awarded, planned completion in 2020)
 - Development supplement to inventory tool to calculate carbon offsets from local tree canopy (submitted, TBD)
- SuAsCo Cisma Small Grants
 - Invasive species management plan for Natick's Town Forest
- Dam and Seawall Repair or Removal Grant to assess potential breach of South Natick Dam (awarded 2020)
- Hazard Mitigation Grant focused on replacement of Public Works generator (TBD)
- Culvert Replacement Municipal Assistance Grant Program (not awarded)

All of these projects are directly related to priority action items identified in Natick's MVP Plan.

5. Please list any other steps that your municipality has taken towards implementing your priority actions.

In addition to the work identified in the above grants, Natick has also completed the following actions since publishing its MVP report in May 2018:

In FY19:

- Adopted a non-binding resolution to reduce Natick's greenhouse gas emissions by 100% by 2050; adopted at Fall 2018 Town Meeting
- Increased the additional amount of required Class I Renewable Energy in Natick's electricity aggregation program from 5% to 10% beginning with July 2019 meter reads.
- Began requiring the use of NOAA Atlas 14 rainfall data for stormwater design review with Conservation Commission.
- Completed repairs to the Memorial Elementary School generator
- Approved capital funding to reconstruct/repair the South Natick Charles River Dam

Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs

Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Program Yearly Progress Report

July 1, 2019 - June 30, 2020 Reporting Period



- Received environmental bond funding to support the replacement of generators at the Town's water treatment plant
- Joined the Charles River Climate Compact, an initiative of the Charles River Watershed Association (May 2019)

In FY20:

- Passed, by majority vote, changes to Natick's Stormwater Bylaw and worked with the Conservation Commission to author accompanying regulations
- Developed a tool allowing residents to view where stormwater drains
- Contracted GZA to design rehabilitation of South Natick Dam; withdrew local permit request with Conservation Commission to assess breach alternative
- Assessed hydropower opportunities in conjunction with dam rehabilitation
- Explored feasibility of forest carbon sequestration project, similar to the Tri City Forest Project
- Explored goat-scaping pilot project with Natick Community Organic Farm to remove invasive species from public property
- Installed solar canopies at Natick High School
- Installed four additional electric vehicle charging stations in public lots
- Worked with Charles River Climate Compact communities to identify priorities across the watershed
- Revised Kennedy Middle School site plan to include battery storage solution
- Increased enrollment in Natick's water use tracking tool (WaterSmart); 28% of water customers are now enrolled
- Appropriated capital funds to study electrification of municipal buildings

6. Please list any potential next steps to advance priority actions during FY2021 (July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021)?

Natick is applying for MVP funds to expand local clean energy resiliency for our Public Water System and Wilson Middle School, conduct public outreach and build consensus regarding the future of the South Natick Dam, and assess the impacts of projected increases in precipitation on riverine flooding within the Charles River Watershed.

Natick looks forward to hearing back from funders regarding its Green Communities, REPA, EEA and other grant applications, and hopes to begin those projects soon. The Town also plans to propose improvements to its Aquifer Protection District Zoning at an upcoming Town Meeting.

7. Please note any difficulties or challenges the community has identified through the MVP planning process or while seeking to implement priority actions and any steps the community has identified to address these challenges.

Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs

Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Program Yearly Progress Report

July 1, 2019 - June 30, 2020 Reporting Period



Coordinating actions across departments and keeping MVP priorities top of mind continues to be challenging. Natick is in the process of hiring a new Deputy Town Administrator of Operations and the MVP Core Team anticipates working with this individual to create further accountability and ownership of priority actions.

Lack of funding also continues to be a challenge when implementing priority actions. The Town has to be continuously creative in leveraging funding through various grant opportunities and other financial sources. We anticipate this will be even more difficult in the coming years due to the fiscal impacts of COVID-19.

8. Please identify any data needs or information gaps that the state could help fill.

Parcel-level data and maps depicting the anticipated impacts of increased precipitation and other projected climate impacts would be valuable for planning and regulatory purposes. Natick, in collaboration with 10+ communities in the Charles River Watershed, is requesting funds to fill this gap.